

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the response of Government to this weapon oriented nuclear research and reprocessing of spent fuel in augmented scale?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes. The Institute for Science and International Security, a US based non-governmental Institute, has been reporting since July, 2006 on the basis of commercially available satellite imagery that Pakistan is building a second heavy water based plutonium production reactor purportedly capable of producing enough plutonium for 40 to 50 nuclear weapons a year. The July, 2006 report was disputed by the US National Security Council arguing that the reactor is expected to be substantially smaller and less capable than reported.

(b) to (e) Government monitors all developments that have a bearing on India's national security and remains committed to taking all necessary steps to safeguard it in accordance with its own assessments.

Indian business enterprises in Nepal

307. SHRI DEVDASAPTE:

SHRIS.S.AHLUWALIA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the business enterprises set up in Nepal by Indian citizens indicating number of enterprises set up in manufacturing units, hotels, constructions and infrastructure, etc. and aggregate volume of investments made in respective sectors;

(b) whether it is a fact that several Indian enterprises had to be closed down in the recent past due to lack of physical security to the individuals and their establishments and threats from Maoists;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by Government with a view to mitigate the problems of the affected Indian entrepreneurs in Nepal?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) According to the latest data provided by Government"

[1 March, 2007]

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of Nepal, 300 ventures with foreign investments from India were registered in Nepal in 2005, involving total foreign investment of approximately Rs. 600 crores. 201 ventures were registered in manufacturing, 32 in hotel and resorts, 8 in construction and 18 in infrastructure-related sector. According to the estimates provided by Government of Nepal, out of these 300 registered ventures, only about 125 were in operation.

(b) and (c) In recent years, Maoist activities and threats have, from time to time, caused temporary disruptions in various business sectors of Nepal. These disruptions have also, *inter alia*, affected Indian enterprises operating in Nepal.. There is no reported instance of permanent closure of any major Indian business enterprise in Nepal on account of Maoist threats.

(d) Government attaches the highest importance to the security of Indian citizens and Indian business enterprises in Nepal. Cases involving safety and security of people of Indian origin in Nepal and Indian business enterprises are taken up by the Government of India with the Government of Nepal, including at the highest levels.

Minister's visit to Pakistan

308. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that he had visited Pakistan in January, 2007;
- (b) if so, details of the subjects discussed; and
- (c) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Yes. The External Affairs Minister visited Pakistan to convey an invitation from the Prime Minister to the Prime Minister of Pakistan to attend the 14th SAARC Summit to be held in New Delhi in April 2007. Apart from SAARC related issues, he discussed bilateral issues with Pakistani leaders and reviewed the progress in the composite dialogue. The External Affairs Minister invited Pakistan's Foreign Minister to India in February, 2007 for the Joint Commission meeting. They agreed to establish a committee on prisoners comprising retired judges of the